



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

TODD P. GRAVES

Contact Don Ledford, Public Affairs • (816) 426-4220 • 400 East Ninth Street, Room 5510 • Kansas City, MO 64106

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/index.html

JANUARY 30, 2006
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Note: Audio comments from U.S. Attorney Todd Graves, as well as photos from today's press conference and court documents related to this case, may be downloaded from the district's Web site at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/index.html
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/news2006/enss_plea_agreement.pdf

FORMER POLICE SERGEANT PLEADS GUILTY TO CHILD PORN, ENTICING A MINOR FOR SEX

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a former sergeant with the Richmond, Mo., Police Department pleaded guilty in federal court today to possessing child pornography and using the Internet to entice a child to engage in illicit sexual conduct.

Rick E. Enss, 42, of Norborne, Mo., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Scott O. Wright this afternoon to the charges contained in a March 30, 2005, federal indictment.

"Under the terms of this plea agreement," Graves said, "both the government and the defendant agree to recommend to the court a sentence of 20 years in federal prison without parole. **Enss** fully admits to not only the specific child pornography and enticement charges contained in the federal indictment, but also to the long-term sexual abuse of his minor daughter.

"Twenty years in federal prison is a tough sentence," Graves added, "but a tough sentence is just, not only because of the horrendous nature of the offense and the physical and psychological harm inflicted upon his victim, but also because this former police officer so flagrantly abused his position of trust and authority. This was a crime against his own family, against many other children victimized by child pornography, and against the community."

As a result of today's plea agreement, the Missouri Attorney General's Office also agreed to allow **Enss** to plead guilty to a single state charge of child molestation in the first degree, with

the other charges being dismissed and the state sentence running concurrent to the federal sentence.

By pleading guilty today, **Enss** admitted that he used five different computers to commit the offenses, including a desktop and laptop computer belonging to the Richmond Police Department. **Enss** worked on cases involving crimes against children for the Richmond Police Department, where he was employed for 10 years before resigning in October 2004.

"More than 2,500 images of child pornography and more than 200 stories of incest were found on those computers," Graves said.

From 1999 to September 2004, **Enss** searched for child pornography on the Internet and downloaded images and videos of children engaged in sexually explicit conduct on those computers. **Enss** also burned copies of his child pornography collection to CDs. **Enss'** child pornography collection included images of children engaged in sadistic and masochistic conduct, children as young as infants and toddlers, images of violent rape and torture, and images of adult men with both young female and male children.

"**Enss** forced his daughter to view both child pornography and adult pornography on the Internet," Graves said. "He used pornography as a means of grooming her to engage in illegal sexual activity."

At the time of the time of the offenses, Graves explained, **Enss** lived at his home in Richmond with his wife and three of his children. In 1994, he began molesting his daughter when she was five or six years old, and continued molesting her for several years. In 2001, when the victim was approximately 12 or 13 years old, **Enss** began using the Internet to conduct sessions in which he forced his daughter to sit next to him at the computer while he accessed child pornography, adult pornography, and incest stories. **Enss** had his daughter view images and videos of child pornography, view adult pornography, and read stories of incestual behavior. These incest stories included fathers involved in sexually explicit activities with their daughters.

During these sessions, Graves said, **Enss** molested his daughter and eventually intensified his molestation to full sexual intercourse. During the course of the sexual intercourse and the computer sessions, **Enss** physically restrained his daughter on more than one occasion. "**Enss** ordered his daughter to keep their activity secret," Graves said. "He told her would commit suicide if she told anyone."

The federal indictment charges **Enss** with using a computer connected to the Internet to entice or coerce a minor to engage in illegal sexual activity. Typically, Graves explained, this would involve a defendant using the Internet to communicate with a minor victim through an online chat room, instant messaging or e-mail in order to entice the minor to meet with the adult to engage in illicit sex.

“This charge is unique,” Graves said, “because **Enss** used the Internet to groom his victim, rather than to communicate with his victim. This marks the first time we’ve used this federal statute to prosecute a defendant for using the Internet in this manner.”

Enss' sexual intercourse with his daughter continued until May 2004, when she sought help at a church camp. Upon her return from that church camp, **Enss** changed his passwords on his computers, and reinstalled Windows on his home office computer in an effort to destroy the evidence of child pornography and incest stories on his home computers. He continued to use his CDs to access his child pornography on his Richmond Police Department desktop and laptop after the government investigation began. When contacted by the Richmond Police Department Chief about returning his laptop to the station, **Enss** viewed the child pornography on the computer one last time and then attempted to destroy the evidence of the child pornography on the laptop.

“Protecting children from sexual and online predators is my highest priority,” Graves said. “Child predators come from all walks of life and across socio-economic lines. It’s especially tragic when the alleged perpetrator is a trusted and respected member of our community, and even more so when he’s a law enforcement officer, sworn to uphold the law.”

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Cynthia Phillips. It was investigated by the State Technical Assistance Team and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/index.html